

When Europe had long been enshrouded in the "dark ages," Martin Luther seized the trumpet of the Saxon tongue, and blew a blast that rang from Rome to the Orkneys.

I could recall incidents in my own experience that illustrate how, after dark days of discouragement, at evening time it was light. In my first pastoral charge of a small church, the discouragements were so great that I was under a strong temptation to abandon the difficult field of labor entirely. Suddenly there came the most remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit that I have witnessed during my whole ministry! That revival was worth more to me than any year in the theological seminary.

This beautiful passage of the bright eventide is finely descriptive of a Christian old age. Some people have a pitiful dread of growing old, and count it a disgrace. They possibly think that if the line in their family Bible that records the day of their birth were subjected to the fashionable process of the "higher criticism," it might prove to be erroneous! But if life is spent in God's service its later years may be well described in the quaint Scotch version of the ninety-second Psalm:

"And in old age when others fade,  
They fruit still forth shall bring;  
They shall be fat, and full of sap,  
And aye be flourishing."

The October of life frequently yields its richest and ripest fruitage. The Rev. Dr. Richard S. Storrs delivered his most magnificent sermons and addresses after he had passed threescore. The most majestic and thrilling burst of eloquence that ever flowed from Gladstone's lips was that appeal for bleeding Armenia, when his life clock had already struck eighty-six! Why should not the Indian summers of a well-spent life show every leaf on the tree blazing with ruddy gold? The noble old Christian philanthropist, William Wilberforce, who had suffered severe pecuniary losses, wrote in his diary: "I sometimes understand why my life has been spared so long. It is to prove that my life can be just as happy without my fortune as when I possessed it. Sailors, it is said, when on a voyage at sea, drink to 'friends astern' until they get half-way across, and then to 'friends ahead' for the rest of the voyage. With me it has been friends ahead for many a year." Wilberforce was not the only veteran Christian who got glimpses of the friends ahead in the bright afterglow of life.

If it is true that the old age of a faithful follower of Christ exhibits the light at eventide, still more impressively does this often apply to his or her dying bed. During my active pastorate I sometimes got better sermons from my people than I ever gave to them. I recall now a most touching and sublime scene that I once witnessed in the death chamber of a noble woman, who had suffered for many months from an excruciating malady. The end was drawing near. She seemed to catch a foregleam of the glory that awaited her. With tremulous voice she began to repeat Henry Lyte's matchless hymn, "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide." One line after another was feebly

repeated until, with a rapturous sweetness, she exclaimed:

"Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes,  
Shine thru the gloom, and point me to the skies;  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee,  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

As I came away from that room, which had been as the vestibule of heaven, I understood the "light at eventide" could be only a flashing forth of the overwhelming glory that plays forever around the throne of God!

Brooklyn, N. Y.

## OUR MISSIONARIES IN FAR EAST.

By Rev. H. F. Williams, Editor Missionary.

A few days were very profitably spent in Japan, as we passed through en route to Korea. Rev. R. E. McAlpine made the considerable trip to Yokohama to extend greeting when we arrived, and gave a good beginning to our journeyings in the Far East. After a day in Yokohama and Tokio, during the visit of our war vessels, we went to Nagoya to spend Sunday. The railway trip was most interesting, the traveler having Mr. McAlpine for a companion is most fortunate. He proved himself an encyclopedia of information on missionary work and knowledge of points of special interest. The farms and towns, the mountains and valleys, and, most of all, the people engage the constant attention of an observant traveler. The scenery included a fine view of the sacred mountains of Japan, Fujiyama, in its combined beauty of symmetry and grandeur of snow-crowned summits. The Sunday in Nagoya was delightfully spent in the home of Mr. and Mrs. McAlpine. It was a privilege to preach at the English service in the afternoon, and at the evening service of the Japanese First Presbyterian church. There was time for only a brief visit with Miss Houston and Miss Evans, at our Nagoya Girls' School, but it was long enough to learn much of what has been accomplished and the possibilities of this school for Japanese girls.

A half day's journey brought us to Kobe. The two days waiting for the steamer to Korea were used in seeing something of our work in this city. At another time there will be a fuller account of the Theological School conducted by Mr. Myers and Mr. Buchanan. A class of seventeen Japanese young men is taking a course of study that, when completed, will give our Japan mission a valuable addition to our preaching force. The progress already made is ample justification for the establishment of the school. The movement merits the prayerful interest and financial support of the Home Church.

The voyage from Kobe to Mokpo was made on a small Japanese vessel, taking us through the Inland sea to Shimonoseki, across the strait to Fusan (Korea) and around the southern end of the peninsula to Mokpo, the first of our stations to be visited. The passage through the Korean archipelago was surprisingly beautiful. The islands seemingly numberless and, rising